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**NEWS RELEASE – Cape May, NRCS Plant Materials Center**

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Cape May Plant Materials Center to Celebrate 40 Years of Conservation Success for New Jersey and Mid-Atlantic Region**

***Center provides conservation services for region which includes significant portions North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and southeast Pennsylvania***

***40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration will be held September 15<sup>th</sup> at the Center and is open to the public***

**Cape May, NJ** – After a severe storm swept through New Jersey in 1963, leaving behind a path of destruction that leveled hundreds of homes and claimed many lives, residents realized that the loss of vegetation over the years preceding the storm resulted in much of the extensive damage. Something had to be done to encourage landowners to replant protective vegetation that would act as a first line of defense against another powerful storm.

One of the solutions was to build a regional Plant Materials Center (PMC) in Cape May that would serve as catalyst to begin many conservation efforts in the region. 40 years later, the Cape May PMC is doing exactly that and is considered an absolutely critical resource by many national and local environmental groups.

“We’re thrilled to have an opportunity to have area residents come to our PMC’s birthday party and see for themselves firsthand what we are doing here to find environmental solutions using plants,” said Bill Skaradek, manager of the PMC. “For instance, a lot of folks have no idea that many of the region’s protected dunes are a direct result of the PMC’s efforts.”

The PMC works on many conservation issues throughout the mid-Atlantic region. The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration begins at 11:00 on September 15. After the opening ceremony a catered lunch will be served. The PMC encourages the public to view the exhibits it will have on display and to take an American Trolley tour of the Center. The trolley tours begin at 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. The PMC is located at 1536 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House.

### **About Us**

**The USDA NRCS Plant Materials Program consists of a network of Plant Materials Centers (PMCs) and Plant Materials Specialists located throughout the United States. For over 70 years, PMCs and Specialists have provide essential and effective plant solutions for critical habitats, environmental concerns, management practices, and key farm and ranch programs. There are 26 PMCs with service areas defined by ecological boundaries.**